

# Navajo County Coalition Against Drug Abuse

## The Navajo County Drug Project

A Coalition of Concerned Navajo County Residents Banned Together to:

- EDUCATE the Community on the substance abuse crisis
- REHABILITATE those who have fallen into the addiction
- ENFORCE laws pertaining to the spread of substance abuse in our communities



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Friends of the Coalition Launch WeTip, Inc.™ Community Crime Line

WeTip, Inc.™ national crime line is now accessible in central Navajo County. The non-profit Friends of the Navajo County Coalition Against Drug Abuse, Inc., through community donations, funds this cost-effective, neutral, third party crime hotline. The toll-free crime line number is (800) 78-CRIME (27463).

The non-profit WeTip hotline provides an avenue for citizens to give anonymous information regarding criminal activity without fear of reprisal. They may call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in English or Spanish. Informants who wish to be considered for a reward for tips that result in solved crimes can earn up to \$1,000 reward, according to WeTip Chief Executive Officer Susan Aguilar, on hand for the launch and training. Program Development Director Sue Mandell joined Aguilar, both from WeTip's Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., headquarters.

Caller tips are fed back to appropriate local law enforcement offices for follow up and resolution. Community action fliers or other tools may be circulated as a result of a tip, according to Aguilar, to help solve crimes. "No crime or tip is too small," Aguilar noted. "It could be bullying or a trash can fire, graffiti, drugs, robbery, gang activity or murder. Even something that seems insignificant could be the final piece to solve the puzzle." She encouraged community members to call in anything suspicious or unsettling in their environment.

Area law enforcement leaders gathered Thursday for WeTip training at Show Low City Council Chambers. Navajo County Attorney Brad Carlyon said, "It is a great day in our county that we are all working together, and WeTip is just a part of that." Navajo County Sheriff KC Clark said, "crime knows no boundaries. WeTip brings all the crime fighters together. We are 100 percent committed to this."

"I am so thankful for this to be happening," said Navajo County Superintendent of Schools Linda Morrow. "We can't educate students if they live in fear for any reason. To feel safe, they may need to provide information on a best friend or family member—even a parent. I love that this is a county-wide collaboration."

Friends of the Coalition Vice President and Coalition Steering Committee member, Show Low Police Chief Jeff Smythe is instrumental in bringing law enforcement units on board for the project. Locally, WeTip is in cooperation with Navajo County Coalition Against Drug Abuse, Navajo County Sheriff's Department and police departments including Show Low, Pinetop-Lakeside, Snowflake-Taylor, Winslow and Holbrook, the Department of Public Service and the Navajo County Attorney's Office. For jurisdictional reasons, it does not currently serve callers from neighboring reservations.

**Navajo County Coalition Against Drug-Abuse – The Navajo County Drug Project**

**P.O. Box 1596, Pinetop, AZ 85935  
(928) 368-7519, (928) 358-1645 FAX**

[navajocountydrugproject@gmail.com](mailto:navajocountydrugproject@gmail.com)      [www.navajocountydrugproject.com](http://www.navajocountydrugproject.com)

*Mission Statement:*

To develop a diverse community representation, coordinate a sustained effort in educating and preventing the substance abuse through a plan for change in local social norms through prevention, treatment and vigorous enforcement of existing laws.

Chief Smythe highlighted the need for community cooperation in crime fighting, in view of the recent Wal-Mart shootings and a reported 50 vehicle break-ins in Show Low and the county since January. "WeTip creates a safe haven with no reprisal for callers," he noted. Winslow Police Chief Steve Barnett agreed. "This is a 'safe' way for citizens to provide information. We support the WeTip program." He notes that "law enforcement offices are coming together to work as a team in Navajo and Apache counties."

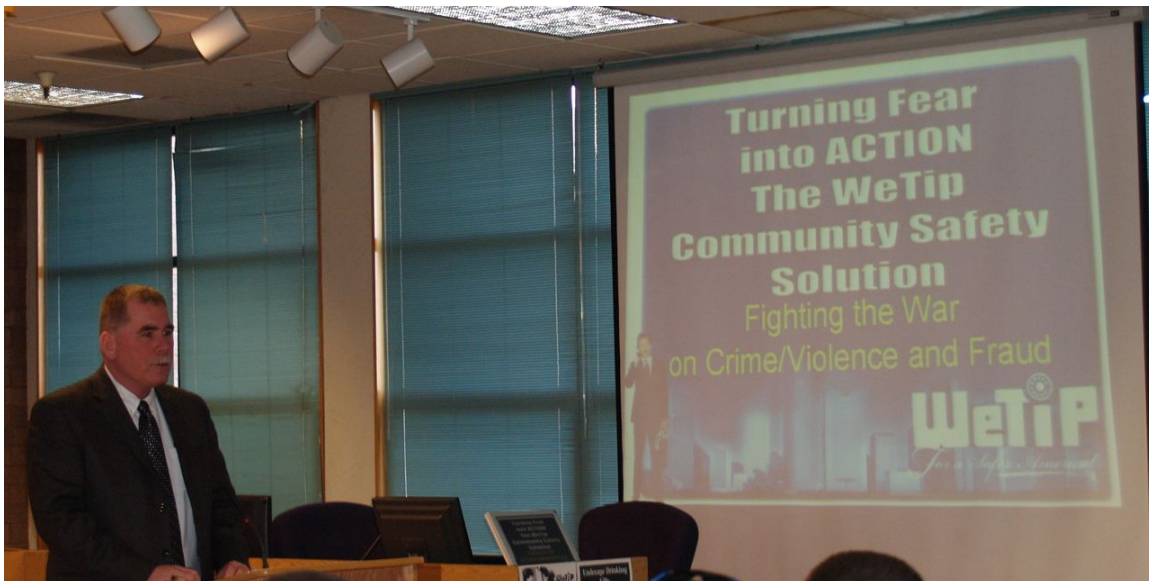
Snowflake-Taylor Police Chief Jerry Van Winkle said he is excited about the new program. "We have 62 square miles to cover. There are a lot of places involved in criminal activity." He added that a crime line gives the officers extra eyes in the community. Pinetop-Lakeside Police Chief Sherwood Eldredge notes that information solves crime. "Getting information to us in a timely manner and with anonymity is critical."

"WeTip is an asset to our community and our law enforcement offices in fighting crime in an increasingly difficult economy," said Navajo County Coalition Against Drug Abuse Coordinator Debe Campbell. "While drugs are the Coalition's focus, up to 80 percent of all crimes are drug and alcohol related—whether it be DUI, theft, robbery, domestic violence, identity theft or direct drug charges. This is one step toward bringing our community together and giving every citizen a channel of responsibility to keep us all safer."

Informational posters, brochures and pocket cards are being distributed throughout communities at chambers of commerce, law enforcement offices and schools for the remainder of March. There are a limited number of additional materials immediately available locally during the launch by emailing [navajocountydrugproject@gmail.com](mailto:navajocountydrugproject@gmail.com) with questions or requests. Further materials, including signage for parking lots or entrances to towns and business areas, also are available. Ordering information for these materials soon will be available at [www.navajocountydrugproject.com](http://www.navajocountydrugproject.com)

For additional information visit [www.navajocountydrugproject.com](http://www.navajocountydrugproject.com) or [www.wetip.com](http://www.wetip.com)

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Top photo: Navajo County Sheriff KC Clark

Bottom photo: Show Low Chief Jeff Smythe

Speaking to law enforcement officers from across the county at training for the launch of the national WeTip crime line program in Navajo County.

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